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**Department of Education
Federal Student Aid (FSA)**

**Revised Market Research Questions
Based on 2/11/2003 CSB Core Team Meeting**

Published Questions

Business

| Question |
|---|
| <u>Recommended Lead Question</u> A. Can the CSB solution outlined in the SOO be accomplished? (Can it be done?) B. Does the concept as outlined in the SOO make sense? C. Is there a better approach? |
| <u>Integration Models</u> Please provide models from industry that show this type of integration on systems of comparable size, volume, and complexity. |
| <u>Innovation</u> What industry innovations exist or may become available that might improve performance, reduce cost, improve efficiency and effectiveness, improve customer satisfaction, etc.? |

Acquisition

| Question |
|--|
| <u>Level of Detail</u> What is the appropriate level of detail you would like to see in the SOO in order to provide the best response and most effective solution? |
| <u>Best-in-Business</u> What strategies should FSA adopt for fulfilling the diverse functions of CSB with best-in-business practices/providers? Why? |
| <u>Contracting Strategy</u> A. What teaming approaches/ joint ventures/ subcontractor arrangements, if any, would be appropriate to accomplish the variety of tasks involved? B. How would this approach help FSA achieve the CSB vision? |
| <u>Performance Metrics</u> A. What performance measures are used by industry and have been effective in measuring success? B. What approaches toward incentives and disincentives have been effective? |
| <u>Length of Contract</u> Please describe how the length of the contract would impact cost. For example, please describe how lengthening a contract from 5 to 10 years (with option years) might affect the pricing schedule and/or lower costs. |
| <u>Costs</u> A. Please provide information regarding pricing terms and conditions to implement the approach in the draft SOO. B. What impact would a securitization of the portfolio have on this acquisition? <i>Please do not comment on advisability of securitization.</i> C. Are there any other external factors outside the FSA environment to consider for pricing this contract? |

Source Selection Information see FAR 2.101 and 3.104

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Transition

| Question |
|---|
| <u>Timeframe</u> Based on best-in-business practices, what is a reasonable timeframe for implementation and transition to the CSB solution? |
| <u>Risk Management and Contingency Planning</u> A. What are risks associated with this type of integration project? B. What are important considerations for contingency planning? C. How could FSA mitigate risks, create a smooth transition, and minimize the cost of transition? Please organize your response around the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• System build-out and testing• Data migration and integrity• Ongoing operations (includes call centers, fulfillment, software maintenance, etc.)• Customer service• Other |

Other

| Question |
|---|
| <u>Independent Verification & Validation</u> FSA is considering using an IV&V to oversee the CSB contract. What approaches for incorporating IV&V into all aspects of the contract, including the business processes and technical architecture would encourage a successful collaboration? |

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Conversation Questions

Business

| Question |
|--|
| <u>Past Performance</u> Demonstrate, through examples of past performance with comparable or similar systems, that you can successfully provide this solution. |

Acquisition

| Question |
|---|
| <u>Small Business/Minority Owned</u> FSA has specific goals to include minority-owned and small businesses in contracts. How could the contract be structured to use small or minority-owned business as the prime or subcontractors? |
| <u>Performance Metrics</u> Talk to us about what you are doing with current clients with incentives/disincentives. |
| <u>Multiple Contract Vehicles</u> What have you experienced in terms of successes and failures associated with a contract/solution crossing multiple contract vehicles (such as GSA schedules)? |
| <u>Costs</u> How would you structure the costs so that portfolio growth is not a primary cost driver? |

Technical

| Question |
|--|
| <u>COTS vs Custom</u> One goal of this market research is to glean the state and maturity of technology in this industry. Currently, within FSA there exists a tension between COTS and Custom products. Based upon the volume and size of the portfolio, how would industry resolve that tension with a technical solution? What would be an appropriate integrated technical solution (e.g., telephony, call centers, software, hardware, etc.) <i>Please limit your response to no more than 1 page.</i> |
| <u>Existing vs New Technology</u> FSA is also interested in the possibility of leveraging assets belonging either to the CSB vendor, FSA or 3 rd party (COTS, current technology, or existing systems) to ease transition. A. Given what we are trying to accomplish, is the use of an existing system or technology feasible? B. Rather than leverage existing systems or assets, is it preferable to bring in new technology? |

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Management and Leadership

| Question |
|---|
| Typically government contracts require certain key personnel. Based on your experience with acquisitions of this size, what is the best structure for project management and interaction? For example, what would be the critical roles and positions? During the implementation of this solution? During ongoing operations? |

Other

| Question |
|--|
| What other information do you think we should consider in order to complete our solicitation and achieve the CSB vision? |

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